

WORLD AGRICULTURAL WEATHER HIGHLIGHTS

May 10, 2001

1 - UNITED STATES

During April, dry, often warm weather depleted topsoil moisture across the southern Plains, Ohio Valley, and southern Atlantic States, but allowed summer crop planting to gain momentum. In contrast, areas from the eastern Dakotas to the upper Mississippi Valley experienced major spring flooding, triggered by melting snow and heavy precipitation. In the Northwest, showery weather aided small grains and brought limited relief from long-term drought. Elsewhere in the West, including California and Arizona, a warming trend provided improving conditions for fieldwork and crop development. Early-month freezes in California and the Northwest adversely affected some fruits and newly planted summer crops. Meanwhile, warm weather prevailed in areas from the Plains eastward during the first half of the month, followed by a sharp cold snap on April 17-20 that damaged some fruit tree blooms and tender ground vegetation in the Ohio Valley and interior South.

2 - SOUTH AMERICA

In April, above-normal rainfall in central Argentina favored filling second-crop soybeans, but slowed other summer crop harvests. Late-April dryness, however, aided fieldwork. In northern Argentina, above-normal rainfall slowed cotton harvesting. In southern Brazil, near- to above-normal rainfall slowed soybean harvesting in Rio Grande Do Sul, but did not significantly hamper harvest activities in remaining areas. Below-normal April rainfall reduced moisture supplies for cocoa in coastal Bahia and coffee in Espirito Santo.

3 - EUROPE

In April, unseasonably cool, wet weather plagued England, France, and the Benelux countries, keeping topsoils too wet and fieldwork to a minimum. In Spain and Portugal, below-normal precipitation spurred corn and sunflower planting, but increased irrigation requirements. In Germany and Italy, seasonably mild weather and near- to above-normal rainfall favored winter grain development, but caused some delays in summer crop planting. Moisture supplies remained adequate for winter grains in northeastern Europe, and continued to rebound in southeastern Europe.



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4 - FSU-WESTERN

In April, above-normal precipitation fell in Ukraine, southern Russia, Belarus, and the Baltics, providing adequate to abundant moisture for early winter grain development and spring grain germination. Unseasonably mild weather stimulated winter grain growth and aided the germination of newly planted crops.

5 - NORTHWESTERN AFRICA

In April, worsening drought and periodic heat in Morocco and Algeria reduced yield prospects for winter grains in the reproductive to filling stages of development. Late-season rains stabilized conditions for crops in Tunisia.

6 - MIDDLE EAST AND TURKEY

During April, rain brought additional relief to reproductive winter wheat across Turkey's Anatolian Plateau, and maintained generally favorable moisture levels in eastern Turkey. However, unfavorable warmth and dryness persisted in Iran, stressing immature winter crops.

7 - SOUTH ASIA

In April, unseasonably wet weather hampered winter grain and oilseed harvests in Pakistan and northwestern India. Pre-monsoon shower activity increased moisture levels for rice cultivation in Bangladesh and southern and eastern India.

8 - EASTERN ASIA

Across the North China Plain, below-normal rainfall in April stressed rainfed vegetative winter wheat, but favored summer crop planting. In late April, however, timely rain fell in the North China Plain, benefiting reproductive wheat. In Manchuria, below-normal rain favored spring grain and summer crop planting. Across most of the Yangtze Valley and southern China, above-normal precipitation boosted moisture supplies for sugarcane, vegetative early rice, and corn.

9 - SOUTHEAST ASIA

In April, unseasonably wet weather continued in central Thailand, while below-normal rainfall reduced available moisture for winter-spring rice in northern Vietnam. Above-normal rainfall slowed main-season rice harvesting in Java, Indonesia. Drier weather prevailed in the Philippines, following unseasonably heavy rains in March. Near- to above-normal rainfall benefited oil palm in peninsular Malaysia.

10 - AUSTRALIA

Since mid-April, rain in east-central Australia has slowed cotton and sorghum harvesting, but has been overall beneficial for winter grain germination and establishment. More rain is needed in Western Australia before fieldwork can become widespread.

11 - SOUTH AFRICA

Widespread, locally heavy rain has affected most major agricultural areas over the past 4 weeks, slowing early summer crop harvesting, but generating favorable soil moisture levels for wheat germination and establishment.